

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 120515

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS:ETEL, US, GW, PFOR

SUBJECT: US-FRG MEETING ON LW FREQUENCY 209 KHZ AND VOA LW
TRANSMITTER

REF: STATE 120352

PER REFTEL, REPEATED HERewith STATE 074353:

"1. SUMMARY: THE FRG REFUSED TO ENTER INTO ANY SHARING
ARRANGEMENT OF THE VOA LW TRANSMITTER AND LW FREQUENCY 209
KHZ, BUT AGREED TO STUDY A PACKAGE PROPOSAL INVOLVING FULL
TIME USE OF LW FREQUENCY 209 KHZ BY DEUTSCHLANDFUNK (DLF),
A SEPARATE BUT RELATED VOA ARRANGEMENT WITH DEUTSCHE WELLE
(DW) FOR TWO HOURS USE OF ITS TRANSMITTER AT KIGALI, PRO-
VISION FOR VOA ACCESS TO ITS LW TRANSMITTER AT MUNICH/
ERCHING IN EMERGENCIES, AND SPEEDY APPROVAL OF THE HOLZ-
KIRCHEN MODERNIZATION REQUEST. END SUMMARY.

2. DEPARTMENT OF STATE AND VOA REPRESENTATIVES MET WITH
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FRG OFFICIALS IN WASHINGTON ON MARCH 21 TO DISCUSS POSSIBI-
LITIES FOR FUTURE UTILIZATION OF THE VOA LW TRANSMITTER AT
MUNICH/ERCHING AND LW FREQUENCY 209 KHZ. INASMUCH AS
SEVERAL GERMAN OFFICIALS HAD RECENTLY INDICATED A POSSIBLE
FRG INTEREST IN DISCUSSING, IN ADDITION TO THE UTILIZATION

OF LW FREQUENCY 209 KHZ, THE USG REQUEST FOR FOUR 250 KW

TRANSMITTERS AT HOLZKIRCHEN, TWO REPRESENTATIVES OF THE BIB WERE ALSO AVAILABLE IN THE EVENT THAT SUBJECT CAME UP.

3. THE US SIDE REAFFIRMED THAT THE VOA INTENDS TO RETAIN OWNERSHIP OF THE LW TRANSMITTER, WANTS TO USE THE FACILITY AND ASSIGNED FREQUENCY DURING CERTAIN DAYLIGHT HOURS, AND PROPOSES A SHARING ARRANGEMENT WITH THE DLF. THE GERMAN SIDE, AFTER CONSIDERABLE DISCUSSION INCLUDING ALSO A VOA OFFER TO PERMIT THE DLF USE OF THE FACILITY AND THE ASSIGNED FREQUENCY 209 KHZ TWENTY HOURS PER DAY, STATED THAT IT WAS THE FIRM POSITION OF THE DLF NOT TO ACCEPT ANY RPT ANY SHARING ARRANGEMENT BUT TO INSIST ON FULL TIME USE.

4. THE US SIDE EXPRESSED ITS SURPRISE AND CONCERN AT THIS POSITION, NOTING THAT WE HAD RECEIVED THE IMPRESSION THAT THE FRG HAD NO OBJECTION IN PRINCIPLE TO SHARING. THE GERMAN SIDE STATED THAT WHILE VARIOUS FRG OFFICIALS MIGHT HAVE TAKEN THIS VIEW IN THE PAST, THE COORDINATED FRG POSITION WAS NOW TO INSIST ON FULL TIME FRG USE OF FREQUENCY 209 KHZ. THEY EXPLAINED THAT THE DLF FREQUENCY ASSIGNMENTS ARE NOT SUFFICIENT AND THAT DLF BROADCASTING OBJECTIVES IN EUROPE ARE SUPPORTIVE OF THOSE OF THE US.

5. WHEN IT BECAME APPARENT THAT THERE WAS NO GIVE IN THE FRG POSITION, THE US SIDE EMPHASIZED THE VOA'S STRONG INTEREST IN OBTAINING INSTEAD TWO HOURS USE OF THE DW SHORT CONFIDENTIAL

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WAVE TRANSMITTER AT KIGALI. THE DLF REPRESENTATIVE STATED THAT HE COULD NOT SPEAK FOR DW BUT THAT THE DW, IN CONTRAST TO THE DLF, HAS NO PROBLEM IN PRINCIPLE WITH SHARING ITS FACILITIES WITH OTHER COUNTRIES. THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE BUNDESPOST AGREED TO ARRANGE AND PARTICIPATE IN A MEETING OF VOA AND DW OFFICIALS ON THIS SUBJECT.

6. ALTHOUGH HE UNDERSTOOD THAT THE FRG TEAM MIGHT NOT BE AUTHORIZED TO DISCUSS MATTERS OTHER THAN LW FREQUENCY 209 KHZ, THE CHAIRMAN OF THE US TEAM THEN RAISED THE USG'S REQUEST FOR FOUR 250 KW TRANSMITTERS FOR USE BY RFE/RL ("THE HOLZKIRCHEN MODERNIZATION REQUEST"). HE DESCRIBED IT AS A SUBJECT OF VERY GREAT IMPORTANCE TO THE USG, AND NOTED THAT THE REQUEST HAD BEEN PENDING FOR ALMOST ONE YEAR. HE NOTED FURTHER THAT FRG OFFICIALS IN BONN HAD RECENTLY HINTED TO THE US THAT IF A SATISFACTORY ARRANGEMENT COULD BE WORKED OUT REGARDING 209 KHZ A SPEEDY APPROVAL OF THE HOLZKIRCHEN MODERNIZATION REQUEST WOULD BE EASIER, AND SUGGESTED THAT THE REVERSE WAS TRUE IN WASHINGTON, I.E., PROMPT APPROVAL OF HOLZKIRCHEN, A SUBJECT OF ENORMOUS IMPORTANCE AND OF VERY HIGH LEVEL INTEREST IN THE USG, MIGHT MAKE IT EASIER FOR US TO COME TO AN ARRANGEMENT WITH

THE GERMANS ON 209, A SUBJECT TO WHICH THE FRG OBVIOUSLY ATTACHED VERY GREAT IMPORTANCE. THE US CHAIRMAN EMPHASIZED THAT WHILE IT HAS ALWAYS BEEN OUR INTENTION TO KEEP THE TWO ISSUES SEPARATE, AND WHILE WE CONTINUE NOT TO CONSIDER THEM LINKED, NEVERTHELESS THE TWO ITEMS SEEM INEVITABLY TO COME TOGETHER.

7. IN SUMMARY THE US SIDE ASKED WHETHER, IF THE US WERE TO AGREE TO GIVE DLF TWENTY-FOUR HOURS A DAY USE OF 209 KHZ, IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO STRIKE A BARGAIN INVOLVING VOA PART-TIME USE OF THE DW TRANSMITTER AT KIGALI, PROVISION FOR VOA EMERGENCY ACCESS TO ITS LW TRANSMITTER AT MUNICH/ ERCHING, GERMAN PAYMENT OF THE MOTHBALLING COST OF THE VOA
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LW TRANSMITTER IN THE EVENT THAT THE GERMANS SHOULD DECIDE AT SOME POINT TO BUILD THEIR OWN LW TRANSMITTER, AND PROMPT APPROVAL OF HOLZKIRCHEN. THE US CHAIRMAN EMPHASIZED THAT WE ATTACH GREAT IMPORTANCE TO FRG APPROVAL OF HOLZKIRCHEN WITHIN THE NEXT FOUR-SIX WEEKS. THE VOA REPRESENTATIVES STATED THAT THE TWO SPECIFIC HOURS THE VOA WISHED TO OBTAIN ON THE DW TRANSMITTER AT KIGALI WERE 1600-1800 GMT AND NOTED THAT THE CURRENT ANNUAL COST OF MAINTAINING THE LW TRANSMITTER AT MUNICH/ERCHING AMOUNTED TO ABOUT DOLS 250,-000 PER YEAR.

8. THE FRG SIDE AGREED TO STUDY THE ABOVE SUGGESTION AND TO RESPOND IN WRITING AND/OR IN THE COURSE OF ANOTHER US-FRG MEETING, WHICH MIGHT BE HELD IN BONN. THE FRG NOTED THAT ITS DECISION ON HOLZKIRCHEN HAD BEEN DELAYED FOR VARIOUS POLITICAL REASONS INCLUDING ESPECIALLY THE OFT POSTPONED BREZHNEV VISIT TO BONN AND THE CSCE MEETING AT BELGRADE. THEY STATED THAT THEY COULD MAKE NO PROMISES ON WHEN A DECISION WOULD BE REACHED BUT THAT THEY WOULD INFORM THEIR GOVERNMENT OF THE GREAT URGENCY THE USG ATTACHES TO HOLZKIRCHEN. BOTH SIDES AGREED THAT IT WAS NOT A QUESTION OF FIRM LINKAGE OR OF A SPECIFIC QUID PRO QUO." VANCE

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